

### *Cites Bipartisan Coordination as Road to Success*

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Traffic-choked Highway 99 is getting some much needed relief thanks to six Central Valley congressmen who joined forces in a bipartisan effort.

Federal help for the beleaguered state highway was included in a federal transportation bill that was passed today and is expected to be signed by the President. The \$286 billion Transportation Equity Act includes provisions that make the highway eligible to compete for an exclusive pool of federal road money. It also makes the highway eligible to become a federal interstate and get maintenance and improvement money on an annual basis.

The provisions are aimed at improving traffic flow and safety by widening a 275-mile stretch of the highway between Bakersfield and Sacramento.

The lawmakers involved in the effort include Reps. Bill Thomas, Richard Pombo, Devin Nunes, George Radanovich, Dennis Cardoza and Jim Costa who made the following joint statement:

"This is a historic opportunity for Highway 99, which has been neglected far too long. We look forward to seeing the state and federal governments quickly begin negotiations to bring the roadway into the federal interstate system with the improvements that new federal dollars can provide. Our strong bipartisan cooperation has paved the way for Highway 99 to be designated as a Federal Interstate.

"This is a huge win for the Valley in terms of creating jobs, alleviating traffic congestion, improving air quality and providing a much more efficient transit system with increased lanes and better road conditions, without negatively impacting future federal support for our region's transportation needs. As a unified voice we came together to fight for a level playing field for the citizens of the Central Valley of California--and we won."

Signed,

Rep. Bill Thomas

Rep. Richard Pombo

Rep. George Radanovich

Rep. Devin Nunes

Rep. Dennis Cardoza

Rep. Jim

Costa#####  
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